



Farm and Market Report -Extra

March 9, 2011

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Highlights from the Public Meetings About the Proposed Public Market in Downtown Boston

"It was packed. It blew me away how many people were interested." – Jim Buckle, attendee and farmer, quoted in the Boston Globe, March 4, 2011

On February 23-24, the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) hosted public meetings about the proposed public market in downtown Boston. Below are some highlights from the meetings as well as some important information for how you can get involved in this project.

[If you were unable to attend the meeting but would like to participate in the project going forward, [please share your thoughts on our website](#). For prospective vendors, [please complete a 3-5 minute research survey](#) to help us define what would make a successful public market in Boston.]

More than 125 people attended the first meeting in Boston, including farmers, fishermen, specialty food makers, and the general public. The Project for Public Spaces (PPS), a consultant hired by MDAR to develop an implementation plan for the public market, asked attendees these questions.

- What would you like to buy at the market?
- What activities would you like to see at the market?
- Who are potential partners to implement these activities?
- What would you like the market to look and feel like?

The responses were thoughtful, creative, and informative. Once PPS has completed its final report for the state, a representative sample of public feedback will be available on the website.

[You can see PPS's presentation here.](#)

The next day, in a discussion at the State House, a second meeting focused on prospective vendors. PPS outlined the unique opportunities and challenges facing vendors and management at a public market. After a presentation about what makes public markets work, the crowd of more than 100 people asked questions about rental pricing, vendor parking, delivery options, the relationship with Haymarket, and other issues. Afterwards, the group took a tour of the proposed market space, at [136 Blackstone Street](#) in Boston.

[You can see the presentation here](#) and read a follow up story in the Boston Globe [here](#).

In all, the meetings demonstrated the genuine excitement and enthusiasm for this project. Attendees introduced some important questions for PPS to address in their final report, which will serve as a guide for the state moving forward.

In the meantime, thank you to everyone who attended. Please stay involved and keep the ideas coming.



USDA, MDAR Representatives Visit Somerville Farmers' Market



Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) Commissioner Scott J. Soares (left) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Northeast Regional Administrator James Arena-DeRosa joined Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone at the Somerville Winter Farmers' Market on Saturday, February 12th. The market, located at the Center for Arts at the

Armory on Highland Ave., is the first winter market to open in Greater Boston. Somerville was also the first Massachusetts community to include farm wineries in a farmers' market. Commissioner Soares and Mr. Arena-DeRosa joined Mayor Curtatone for a tour of the market. Vendors and shoppers have consistently given the market rave reviews. The market opened on January 8th and will run through March 26th. Summer farmers' markets will resume in Somerville in Davis Square on Wednesdays and in Union Square on Saturdays, beginning later this spring.

Well over 1,000 community members shop the market each week, which boasts items such as fresh produce, meats and fish, baked goods, cheese and wine. For more information on the winter market, contact Jaime Corliss, Shape Up Somerville Director, at JCorliss@somervillema.gov.

Massachusetts Association of Agricultural Commissions First Annual Meeting

Massachusetts Association of Agricultural Commission Friends and Supporters are invited to the first annual meeting of the newly formed Massachusetts Association of Agricultural Commissions, Inc. (MAAC).

The Meeting will be held on Friday, March 25th at the Holiday Inn, Marlborough, MA. It will begin with a brief social in the Inn Lounge and then move across the hall for a buffet style dinner. After dinner, remarks will be made by MAAC President, Richard Ward, about what MAAC has accomplished in the past year and provide how MAAC plans to support efforts at the community level. Frank DiLuna, Esq. will be our guest speaker and will provide an overview of the MAAC organization and function as set out in MAAC Bylaws. Membership will then elect their Board of Directors and Laura Sapienza-Grabski, Vice President, MAAC will provide closing remarks.

[Click here for invitation and registration form](#). Any questions about MAAC, send to Richard Ward, rjward7@verizon.net, 781-361-5425 or 508-295-1317 x130, www.massagcom.org.



MDAR's mission is to ensure the long-term viability of local agriculture in Massachusetts. Through its four divisions – [Agricultural Development](#), [Animal Health](#), [Crop and Pest Services](#), and [Technical Assistance](#) – MDAR strives to support, regulate, and enhance the Commonwealth's agricultural community, working to promote economically and environmentally sound food safety and animal health measures, and fulfill agriculture's role in energy conservation and production. For more information, go to www.mass.gov/agr or follow us at www.twitter.com/agcommishsoares for the latest agricultural trends and updates. To keep up to date on workshops and events, visit www.mass.gov/agr/events/coming_up.htm.